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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Q 7. (Amended) A mosaic polypeptide comprising one or more antigenic epitopes of each of the HCV core protein, NS3 protein and NS4 protein.

9. (Amended) The mosaic polypeptide of Claim 7, wherein the antigenic epitope of the core protein comprises amino acid residues 1-91 of the HCV polyprotein.

Q2 Conf'd. 10. (Amended) The mosaic polypeptide of Claim 7, wherein the antigenic epitope of the NS3 protein comprises amino acid residues 1471-1573 of the HCV polyprotein.

11. (Amended) The mosaic polypeptide of Claim 7, wherein the antigenic epitope of the NS4 protein comprises amino acid residues 1789-1867 of the HCV polyprotein.

12. (Amended) The mosaic polypeptide of Claim 7, further comprising a second antigenic epitope of the NS4 protein, wherein the second antigenic epitope comprises amino acid residues 1916-1948 of the HCV polyprotein.

Sub-B
Q2
Q2 13. (Amended) The mosaic polypeptide of claim 8, wherein the antigenic epitope of the NS5a protein comprises amino acid residues 2322-2423 of the HCV polypeptide,
Q2 comprises amino acid residues 1471-1573 of the HCV polypeptide.

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 are pending in the present application. Claims 7 and 9-13 are amended herein to more clearly define the invention. Support for these amendments may be found in the specification and claims of the application as filed. Attached hereto is "Version with markings to show changes made" which shows the changes made to the claims by the current amendment.

No new matter is believed added.

The Office Action requires restriction to one of the following four groups of claims:

Group I: Claims 1-6, drawn to an isolated peptide of HCV protein comprising an antigen epitope;

Group II: Claims 7-10, drawn to a mosaic polypeptide comprising an antigen epitope;

Group III: Claims 14-22, drawn to an assay for detecting HCV in a biological sample comprising HCV antigen epitope;

Group IV: Claims 23-25, drawn to an immunogenic composition comprising HCV nonstructural protein.